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OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE A.A.L.
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

APR 2 - 1960

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ANNUAL REPORT

1959

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THE ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN

Official Journal of the Association of Assistant Librarians

(Section of the Library Association)

EDITOR: D. HARRISON

Central Library, Manchester 2.

VOL. 53. NO. 4.

APRIL, 1960

Source Material

Do we pay sufficient attention to the annual reports which flood in from libraries each year? The 1958-1959 batch must by now have all been issued and, having tasted some, swallowed others, and chewed and digested a small proportion, we were left wondering how many librarians read how many reports. Almost a good theme for another readership survey!

Reports can, and should, be read from two different angles; firstly by the practising librarian seeking for new ideas, seeing how others carry out ideas already under consideration, checking too on how old methods are being scrapped. How many other libraries have a record library? How many use photocharging? How many more have done away with counting reference issues or have closed newsrooms last year? Heaven forbid that we should become thoughtless imitators, but no one is too old to learn.

Then there is the use of the report by the librarian in training. Here we would like to add a word in support of those tutors and lecturers who urge the student librarian away from his lecture notes and textbooks to the annual report and similar source material. The progress which is being made to-day can best be shown by a comparison of the situation in individual libraries; though it must be remembered that some libraries—including many of the bad ones—do not issue a report. And the statistical information given is made useful for purposes of comparison by the fact that at least some of it is usually presented in the standardised form recommended by the Library Association. Besides the facts, the opinions of librarians can often be deduced; sometimes they are quite openly expressed, and indeed many an annual report carries a delightful, if sometimes irrelevant, excursion into the philosophy of librarianship. In the year under review there was an interesting variety of comments on the recommendations of the Roberts Report.

Even at the lowest estimation of their worth, annual reports will answer the examination question which periodically crops up directly on the subject. The candidate who shows here that he has read more than one annual report should score. Even if he has only seen the outsides he can suggest—if pertinent to the question—a variant title to the usual *Annual Report*, such as Hampstead's *Books, Information and Service*, *Service to Readers* (Willesden), or *Books and Readers* (Gloucester). Or he can dwell on the value of a cover illustration like St. Pancras's of the House-bound reader service or the West Riding's map of the County. The practising librarian, too, may benefit from these and similar ideas on the external appearance of reports.

Many of our best librarians expend considerable efforts in the preparation of annual reports. We should not lightly assume that all this effort produces nothing to our purpose.

Resignation of the Hon. Secretary

Many members will by now know of the resignation of the Secretary of the A.A.L., John H. Jones, which took effect on 31st March.

John Jones has been secretary of the Association for a little over two years, years into which he has packed a great deal of work on our behalf. His secretaryship has covered an important phase in the library world and he must take a large amount of the credit for the respect with which the A.A.L.'s voice is heard to-day on matters of importance. In particular, we shall remember the admirable way he pressed our case on the A.P.T. II award. We know that his resignation will not mean the end of his interest in the A.A.L.—he has, in fact, already been co-opted to Council for the remainder of 1960.

THE NEW SECRETARY.

John Jones is succeeded in office on 1st April by John Hoyle, of Liverpool Public Libraries, a prominent member and last year's Chairman of the Liverpool Division, to whom we wish every success.

All matters intended for the Secretary should be addressed to:—

JOHN HOYLE, F.L.A., 45, Camphill Road, Woolton, Liverpool.

JOINT CONFERENCE—BIRMINGHAM AND DISTRICT, NORTH MIDLAND, NORTH WESTERN, AND YORKSHIRE BRANCHES

The West Midland Division of the A.A.L. has organised "alternative" (i.e., cheaper but still very good) accommodation aimed especially at the younger member for the above conference to be held at Malvern from 29th April to 1st May. Details of this accommodation and of the conference are obtainable from the Joint Conference Secretary, D. Wright, Esq., F.L.A., Birmingham Public Library, Birmingham, 1.

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ANSAFONE — another new toy

by L. C. Guy, St. Marylebone Public Libraries

I begin by making no apology for introducing yet another mechanical toy. This one, however, is simple, small and not expensive.

St. Marylebone Central Lending Library has three telephones in the public department; one for Counter which deals mainly with renewals, one for the Enquiries Desk for the Reader's Advisers, and one for the Music Library. The Counter phone receives 50—60 renewal requests daily and these calls interrupt the service to readers. We had long since given up the immediate checking of the books for which renewal was requested and allowed the reader to assume renewal for 14 days unless notified by post to the contrary. Some method of eliminating these interruptions was required without preventing readers from being able to renew their books.

A telephone-answering machine appeared to be an ideal answer. To be entirely automatic and therefore at its most efficient, such a machine must have its own G.P.O. line and not pass through a manually operated private exchange. It is then able to operate 24 hours a day whether or not the library is open. The machine to be installed must be of a design approved by the G.P.O. and authority must be obtained from them for its installation. It need not be sited on the counter, but it is an advantage to have it there and since it is no larger than a tape-recorder in a neatly-designed case, it occupies little room.

Readers must be subjected to an extensive publicity campaign so that the phone number becomes widely known. This we achieved by concisely worded bookmarks and without doubt the careful wording of these has helped enormously. Many drafts were made over a period of 6 to 8 weeks and passed from one member of staff to another. The final product has been proved in use by the very accurate messages recorded by readers.

On 1st January, 1960, the machine and publicity were put into action. A reader ringing the special number, WELbeck 2629, hears the following message: **This is St. Marylebone Central Library. This Ansafo**
ne will record your book and record renewal automatically. Give your name, the number and last date stamped on each label. Speak clearly; speak now.

This message must be as brief but explicit as possible. The readers then give their message and ring off. The machine is ready to receive further calls but should the caller have left his telephone lying on the table, the machine will announce after 8/10 seconds of silence on the line that it is about to close down. It then ceases to record, breaks the connection and again becomes ready to take its next call. No renewal of the tape has to be effected by staff. The reel will take an hour's recording which, when transcribed, can be erased and the tape used again from the beginning. This hour represents about 80-90 calls, and it is convenient for us to clear the tape each morning.

Playing back is simple and can be done either over the built-in speaker or by earphones. The latter give better reproduction and concentration for the assistant doing the job. The process takes at least one quarter as long again as the time represented by the tape used. For instance, a full tape of one hour's recording would take at least one and a quarter hours to transcribe. There is not therefore much, if any, staff time saved, but a smoother public service is given, and playing back can

be done at times convenient to the library. The operation of the machine is simple and the recorded messages cannot be accidentally erased. The tape can be stopped at any point during playback and a repeat obtained of any part of a message not clearly understood. All our staff have been able to operate it after a few minutes' demonstration and practice.

The response of readers has been excellent. Practically every message has been clearly and accurately given at dictation speed. Many readers with strange names have spelled them out; foreigners with heavy accents have spoken clearly and syllable by syllable. Most people politely add "Thank you" to their message before ringing off. Apart from scores of short blank intervals denoting people ringing up to see what the machine says, nobody has abused it or endeavoured to be funny at our expense. A member of the Ansafone staff assured me that it was quite a general but strange quirk of human nature that they often found people more polite to these machines than they might be to "live" staff. We find that the reader certainly has taken more trouble to give the correct information when requesting a renewal than he ever did before but then we had not so precisely schooled him as the present bookmark endeavours to do.

The Ansafone machine itself is a sealed unit and no part of it, except the operating switches, can be touched by staff. There is little reason why it should break down, and in this event there is nothing to prevent the incoming calls being accepted in the usual manner. During playback it is, in fact, best to take incoming calls "manually," but the reader should be told what is happening since they sound quite disappointed when answered by the human voice.

Time checks put through on to the tape have revealed some interesting facts. The department is open daily from 9.30 a.m. to 8 p.m. Between 8 p.m. and about 10 p.m., some 8 or 9 calls are received. This is quite logical and probably represents readers who forgot the time and suddenly realised that the library was closed. A dozen calls have been noted on Sundays.

There is no reason why several branches cannot use the same machine, provided that the messages can be communicated to the respective branches soon after transcription and the total number of calls received within the longest period without transcription (say over three days closed) does not exceed the tape time available.

Our experiment has so far been most satisfactory and the number of interruptions due to telephone calls at Counter has been severely curtailed, yet the reader can phone at any time—on any day, to renew his books or records.

[See *Liaison*, February, 1960, for costs and other details of "Ansafone," which is manufactured by Southern Instruments Ltd., 67/68, Jermyn Street, S.W.1.

Manchester Public Libraries have recently installed a similar telephone-answering machine ("T.A.M."), made by Gate Electronics Ltd., of 20, Orchard Street, W.1.—Ed.]

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First Day in Tobago

by R. C. Bengé

Mr. Bengé, well-known to students of bibliography at the North-West Polytechnic School of Librarianship, is now, as many readers will be aware, the first Tutor in Charge of the Eastern Caribbean Regional Library School of Librarianship.

Tobago is a small island off Trinidad and administered from that territory. It is a playground island paradise of the conventional kind, and at present locale for "Swiss Family Robinson," the most expensive film ever made. I am not describing these fantasy worlds, but a day's outing with the mobile library which serves the schools.

As the library van was winding its way along steep twisting roads, apparently into some huge interior, one was not aware that this was an island twenty-six miles by seven. I was reminded of the Appenines, which was absurd because all this was in miniature. Theatrical vegetation and memories of landslide menaced the route. There was no distant view and if there had been one visibility was not more than a few yards because of the rain. According to the book there were thirty thousand people somewhere, but they certainly weren't here. Nobody at all was here until we came to the first school crammed with children who came out—all of them—class by class for their books. They were healthy model children and none of them wore shoes and they stared at me politely and all of them said good morning, sir (in these parts Emily Post is much in demand). Unlike Trinidad, Tobago has no racial mix up and they were all of African descent. Their reading was diverse. Little girls solemnly returned *I want to be a policeman* or *Guide to ballroom dancing*; small boys took away *Manual of the internal combustion engine* and a guide to Switzerland with its improbable snow, and histories of Herzogovina and Ecuador. If I closed my eyes this vehicle was the Kent county library of my rural childhood.

As the mobile trundled on I wondered at these exotic place names, Plymouth and Cardiff and Scarborough and Runnymede. I had not been to Runnymede before. So I asked the assistant (who was intelligent and as matter of fact as only certain young ladies can be) about Tobago's history. And she put down her Osborne and Sharr and looked at me in mild surprise and could not help. It was not her fault. But she knew about Magna Carta.

At the next stop the teacher said that once it was the priests who provided these things, but now it is the government—*our* government: so I said: yes, the missionaries have gone back to convert the English. In the meantime the driver was conducting little tests to see if eager applicant new readers could read. One suspected they knew the words by heart, but it didn't matter. At another stop we came to the end of the road, a recently constructed one. The small wooden school was perched half hidden, high up on a hill above the road and on Sunday it was a church. When the rain lessened a little they swarmed down the hillside to the library. (One of the rules said "books must not be used as umbrellas"). While they were choosing their books the driver told me their parents were smallholders who owned a pig and two cows and produced cocoa. They lived in a shack-type house and perhaps could not read; they belonged where they were. But the children who walked

long distances to school would in most cases go away to the wide world which the books seemed to describe. They know about the remote four seasons and Piccadilly and the Changing of the Guard.

As the last child ran swiftly up the hill in the rain I thought of my own Hoggart land and how it all required some vast sociological answer. At least it was clear that some of these books could not have been read by the children. The important thing was their symbolic value for opening the oyster world. In Hoggart land the book is no longer a symbol. But it is all very complicated and the world is much smaller than one imagines.

Review

Ashby, R. F. Delegation in the library service: the Surrey scheme. (N.W. Polytechnic School of Librarianship. Occasional Papers. No. 13, July, 1959).

One of the hall-marks of a good chief is his ability to select suitable staff and to delegate responsibility with confidence. On a much larger and more impersonal scale, a library authority may also find itself in such a position that delegation becomes a necessary part of its administration. In the paper under review, Mr. Ashby begins by giving a lucid and comprehensive introduction to the theory of delegation and its various applications in local government generally and county librarianship in Surrey in particular.

In Surrey, the difficulties of delegation (organisation, finance, staffing, etc.) appear to have been overcome in the most sensible way—by firm and straightforward allocation of responsibilities, with no shilly-shallying over minutiae, at least not at this advanced stage. The wholesale nature of the process will come as a surprise to those accustomed to a mild form of delegation to regional or district committees acting in a purely advisory capacity. Indeed, the arrangement comes very close to autonomy, when there could be danger of serious diminution of the county's authority.

It is plain that the Surrey scheme could be applied successfully in very few counties outside that of its origin, but this in no way detracts from its importance, particularly in the light of possible legislation and the reorganisation of local government boundaries. A significant feature of Mr. Ashby's paper is the evident amicability of the relations between the county library service as a whole and the delegates. This has obviously come from much probing on both sides, and the freedom granted in, for instance, book purchase and the appointment of junior staff displays a readiness to spread responsibility which is refreshing, to say the least. However, such a system must bring difficulties in its train, and anyone accustomed to a comparatively uncomplicated method of framing estimates might reel somewhat at the thought of consolidating those of eighteen District Councils into the County Library estimate.

It is apparent that the size of the problem created by the many dormitory pockets in Surrey has called for a solution which ranges far beyond the normal problems of county libraries. For this reason alone, Mr. Ashby's paper is an essential text for all Administration and Organisation students. It is difficult to see how the position could be more clearly and succinctly put, and the author is to be congratulated upon a very useful addition to professional literature.

E. F. FERRY.

CATALOGUERS—ARE THEY HUMAN?

by P. D. Gann, Orpington Public Libraries

In a letter to William Stukeley in 1743, Roger Gale wrote: "I have been very busy in ordering my study and making an exact catalogue of the books, a drye, tedious piece of slavery, God wott . . ." More recently, Mr. C. H. Gibbs-Smith is reported as saying (amiably) that only maniacs would be classifiers by profession (*London Librarian*, April, 1959, p.5). Together with the widely held view that cataloguing is a professional cul-de-sac, opinions like these are probably responsible for the relatively poor response to advertisements for cataloguers.

Are we really a separate race of specialists? I think part of the trouble is that many of us catalogue in a vacuum. Away from the lending library we do not share the exasperation of those who find the magazine *Kent Farmer* at 630.5, while the *Essex Farmers' Union Handbook* is at 338.10624267. Nor do we wonder why one book on railways appears at 625, while a very similar work is at 385 or even 656. There are good reasons why B.N.B. uses these numbers; but I think that most lending librarians would rather group books by their similarities than divide them by their differences. It would do us good to see things from their point of view by occasional duty in the public departments.

Apart from the value to the cataloguer, it would also be of service to readers if they could on occasion consult the person who handles all books bought for the system; and who knows, for instance, that the Duke of Bedford's memoirs are at B/RUS and that one looks for books on goat keeping under Animal Husbandry.

Objections will of course be made on administrative grounds: "Our cataloguer deals with 100,000 books a year and cannot spare the time." If he does, he needs a break. Few things are more fascinating than to see the infinite variety of new books arriving at a library. If they have to be dealt with by a too automatic use of B.N.B., they might just as well be sausages coming out of a machine. If you never see your books into the hands of a reader, you are cataloguing in a vacuum.

As a profession dealing with books and people, we have three main functions: to select books, organise them and exploit them. Book selection is not generally regarded as a specialist function, but is usually undertaken by the most experienced librarians on the staff, who also have various administrative duties. The exploitation of stock is not a specialist undertaking either, but is carried on by those who shelve books, arrange exhibitions or displays, compile booklists and bulletins, advise readers, or arrange lectures, talks and other forms of extension activity.

The organisation of books is comparable in importance. Usually it is left in one person's hands, although in some libraries each branch catalogues its own stock, and in Tottenham, each Subject Librarian is his own cataloguer (see *Library Association Record*, August, 1956, p. 301). If it is necessary for one person to be responsible for this work, all senior members of the staff should have an interest in it, and should be allowed to voice their opinions on matters of policy. All qualified librarians have studied cataloguing and classification, and many have views on them worth hearing because they are formed in the public departments where these aids to librarianship are put to the test. I should like to see cataloguers no longer regarded as specialists removed from the main stream of librarianship, but as members of a team who take their full share in the library's work. It would make them more human, if nothing else.

Correspondence

The A.L.A.—Mr. Clements replies

Mr. Hepworth, commenting in the March *Assistant* on my article, "The A.L.A.—Its attainment and value," suggests that I do not look upon this qualification as it should be regarded and that I am not maintaining "the correct perspective when thinking of the A.L.A. and F.L.A." In my defence I should point out that the F.L.A. was outside the scope of my article, and it would therefore seem that he has misunderstood my intention and theme.

I am not arguing for "academic kudos" for the A.L.A., but rather for professional status and stability, for I believe that the qualification is more than a "half-way stage", and it certainly should not be described as an "intermediate stage", as this leads to confusion with the "Intermediate" qualifications of other professional bodies. Associates are fully qualified because with the A.L.A. they become Chartered librarians. Furthermore, it should be realised that of the entire total of Chartered librarians, about two-thirds are Associates. Mr. Hepworth states that the Registration examination "mostly requires a mechanical effort of memory" which typifies an all-too-common attitude among student-librarians and those who have passed through the examination routine, and is exactly what I want to see avoided. The A.L.A. is therefore in its own right of sufficient importance to demand attention, and indeed perhaps I should point out to your correspondent that this article is the first of three on the same subject.*

I should like to point out to your other correspondent, Mr. Riley, that if the full-time course at a library school was the only means of qualifying, local authorities would be compelled both to allow leave of absence and also to award sufficient grants, otherwise there would be no qualified librarians. Mr. Riley's analogy with the teaching profession is interesting, although if students were to attend library school immediately after leaving school, the course would have to be further extended to allow for adequate practice in librarianship, comparable to the student-teacher's "teaching practice."

PHILIP C. CLEMENTS, *St. Alban's College of Further Education.*

*Mr. Clements' second article, "The A.L.A.—its retention and cost," will appear in the May *Assistant*.—Ed.

The University Assistant

How does Mr. Broadhurst's "greatest stumbling block," the different qualifications demanded for work in university and public libraries (*January Assistant*), hinder those of us who are graduates and chartered librarians with experience in both fields? Many of my acquaintances are thus qualified; at least one has already moved into special librarianship! Ease of movement between posts involving similar work in public, university and special libraries should help service and staff. The barriers are made by employers who refuse increments for service elsewhere and decline to transfer superannuation funds. We need a salary and superannuation system designed for our profession.

The A.U.T., like the L.A., will not help in pressing for improved conditions unless the University and Research Section committee, virtually composed of employers, recommends it. Pretending that a degree is a

substitute for professional education (even more than the pretence that the London Diploma plus Part 3 is equivalent to the Final Examination) will only prevent universities from enjoying the services of librarians who have received real professional education and passed the L.A. examinations. University authorities must recognise the value of professional education and the irrelevance of degrees without professional qualifications

Conditions in university libraries tend to improve. In one, appeals to the committee brought reform of a situation in which the summer holidays were arranged in June and others three weeks in advance, and led to the granting of time and considerable financial help for attending conferences. But at least one university library still allows only half the time needed for attending lectures and arbitrarily decides which meetings assistants may have time for. Improvements are likely if a union of chartered librarians is formed and encourages employers, especially educational institutions, to value professional education, the Library Association examinations (not exemptions) and participation in professional meetings (miscalled "frivolity") and to facilitate movement so that librarians may reach the library where they can serve best, be it public, of an educational institution, or special.

DAVID W. HOPE, *Reading University Library.*

Holier than thou

I have been trying in vain to trace a book called "Bibliapathy; a study of the attitudes of British public librarians towards the objectives of the public library." I am sure it must exist, and that it must be a most detailed and authoritative study. Several recent contributors to the *Assistant* seem to have had access to this valuable work, which gives such accurate information about what other librarians think.

Take, for example, the article, "Where are we going?" by Mavis J. Maliphant, in the February issue. "... how many librarians in this field [public librarianship] now consider the reason for their existence?" she asks. How many, indeed? I don't know, but apparently Miss Maliphant does; for the remainder of her article carries the implied assumption that they are very, very few.

Later Miss Maliphant reminds us of that old familiar refrain, "O, but we are public servants . . ." There are rumours that this will be sung in future at every L.A. Conference to the tune, "Everybody's doing it." How right she is to draw our attention to the need to examine our objectives. But, in the best modern tradition, she does not "presume" to do the spade-work; she "merely poses the problem."

In general, this article is typical of those who, excited by newly-discovered ideals, imagine themselves to be their sole possessors. If Miss Maliphant can keep her ideals intact through years of struggle with antipathetic Councils and Committees, she may feel less inclined to adopt a holier-than-thou attitude towards her colleagues.

In a money-conscious society, willing to pay only for measurable results, the present position of public libraries, which can provide almost anything but that, represents a considerable achievement. If we make comparable progress in the next fifty years there will still be no cause for complacency, but perhaps some cause for a little pride. But to judge from "Where are we going?" the only possible answer to the question seems to be "Down the nick" or "Up the creek," whichever you prefer.

J. S. PARKER, *West Riding County Library.*

One man's poison

Miss Maliphant's article (in the February *Assistant Librarian*) is rather like one that I contributed to the *Assistant Librarian* two or three years ago.

Where indeed are we going? It has not been divinely revealed, unfortunately, that the only proper reading for the British is the Everyman's Library. Consequently, I suppose we must tolerate those chaps who will insist upon reading other sorts of book. After all, if their meat is our poison, we don't have to eat it.

IVOR KEMP, *Gloucester City Libraries.*

The Proper Study

Mr. Baguley, in "Mountain to Mohammed" (February *Assistant*), points out the results of "coming a little closer to the readers." In spite of an occasional beery breath, and other more or less unattractive attributes of some of the great British reading public, I heartily endorse his view that there can be no better aim in life (professionally) for any librarian.

"O, thou librarian,
Fold to thy heart thy brother . . ."

Routine and books do oft engross
The earnest young assistant;
He rarely seeks to help a guy—
Unless he is insistent.

This policy is very wrong:
You should go, mingle with the throng:
The elderly ladies seeking romances,
The young and gay, who only go to dances;
The gaunt, the precise, the pornographic punters;
Be they obtuse, inane,
Or merely supercilious.
Control your temper if you can,
And *never* become bilious!
And even if they're bloody
Rude—you still are able to reflect, I hope
With Pope,
"The proper study
Of mankind is man."
Nota Bene: Man
Embraces woman.

If at your work you try to plumb
The depths of human nature—
In after years you will become
Librarians of stature!

MRS. S. L. BRYANT, *Rochester City Library.*

Another Unsolicited Testimonial

As it is said that if you don't blow your own trumpet nobody will do it for you, I draw to your attention the following quotation from

David Baxter's *Two years to do*, to add to Mr. Gann's list of commendation for public libraries.

"The Aldershot Library was a paradise (there was nowhere in the barracks where I could read in winter; the billet had a radio, so that was hopeless and there was television in the NAAFI reading room). But the library had a reading room and a fine collection of art books, and it was here I came to renew ideas and enthusiasms that were snowed under at Willems. Here was silence, warmth, and the dependable quality of pleasure that familiar paintings gave . . ."

A. G. PEPPER, *Deputy Borough Librarian, Aldershot.*

The Classification Research Group

I wish to correct an error of fact in the article by Brian Selby published in your issue for February, 1960.

The Classification Research Group is not an Aslib group, but a quite independent group of persons, some of whom owe allegiance to Aslib, some to the Library Association, and some to both. It meets at Chaucer House by courtesy of the Library Association, and its minutes are published in the *Journal of Documentation* through the generosity of Aslib, since it has neither funds nor facilities of its own.

We value our independence.

BERNARD I. PALMER, *Chairman, Classification Research Group.*

Mr. Selby, incidentally, is now *Branch Librarian at Wantage (Berks County)*, and is no longer with the *National Film Archive*.—Ed.

Interlingua — a bibliography

Readers who were interested in my article, "A new language for documentation" (*Assistant Librarian*, June 1958) may like to be informed that an up-to-date 22-page *Bibliographia de Interlingua* has recently been published, and will be supplied free on application to me at 131, *Hartington Road, Sefton Park, Liverpool, 8.*

B. C. SEXTON, *Liverpool Public Libraries.*

Rationalising the Vote

In recent professional discussions concerning the poor response to appeals to "Use Your Vote," it has frequently been suggested that those members who have not passed the First Professional Examination should not be allowed to exercise this right.

By restricting the right to vote to members who, one may presume, have some knowledge of professional matters, it is hoped to remove a great deal of uninformed opinion—a natural companion of apathy.

Similarly, judging by the unwillingness of institutional members (particularly local authority representatives) to use their votes (just over 20 per cent in one recent election), is it possible that the same arguments could apply to these unique members who give forth vociferously once a year?

If the raw recruit is to be penalised, why not anyone not holding a Library Association qualification. Then there would seem some point in raising the standard of our examination system.

D. H. REVILL, *Nottingham Public Libraries.*

Censorship in Perspective

One of the ideas which seems to be considered as belonging to the essence of librarianship is that there should be no censorship. This means, I take it, that neither state nor some powerful sectional interest should prevent the public library offering material which is regarded as subversive, or heretical.

Is this principle really essential to librarianship, or is it rather an accidental feature of a public library system which has developed in a very liberal society? That the principle has worked well in England since 1850 is very true, but would the Russian public librarian agree that a refusal to accept censorship is necessary in his professional ethic? Perhaps the English librarian a century hence will regard the attitude prevailing in our times as an amusing aberration, a quaint example of the minor liberalisms of the 20th Century.

In England we have a long liberal tradition which is still very strong, so the acceptance of an obtrusive political or moral censorship would be repugnant; but the attitude towards censorship obviously depends on the prevailing political philosophy in the country where the librarian works.

It is not a part of librarianship itself. In countries governed more positively than ours, the librarian may well consider it part of his duty to co-operate with the kommissar or the bishop in preventing the spread of deviationism or heresy.

E. SULLIVAN, *Bradford Public Libraries.*

BIRKBECK COLLEGE (University of London)

Session 1960/61 begins
Monday 3rd October, 1960

Applications are invited from: (i) part-time students wishing to follow evening courses for Internal Degrees in the Faculties of Arts and Science; (ii) full-time and part-time students wishing to read for Higher Degrees by thesis or to follow courses leading to M.A. and M.Sc., Mathematics, M.Sc., Crystallography, and the Academic Postgraduate Diplomas in Psychology and Numerical Analysis.

Applications for admission should be made before 1st June. *Pamphlet and form of application may be obtained from the Registrar, Birkbeck College, Malet Street, W.C.1.*

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14th January, 1960
Hertfordshire County Librarian.

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ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, 1960

To be held on Wednesday, 4th May, at 6.30 p.m., at Chaucer House.

AGENDA

1. Minutes of the previous meeting, held at the Police Assembly Hall, Nottingham, on Wednesday, 13th May, 1959.
2. To receive the Annual Report of the Council, including the Annual Report of the Honorary Treasurer and Honorary Auditors for the year ended 31st December, 1959.
3. The retiring President, E. F. Ferry, F.L.A., will formally hand over the office of President to A. C. Jones, F.L.A.
4. To nominate and elect two Honorary Auditors, who, in accordance with Rule 5(b), may not be members of the Council.
5. Any other business.

THE PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

of A. C. Jones, Esq., F.L.A.

will follow the Annual General Meeting.

Please bring your copy of this issue of the "Assistant Librarian" to the Annual General Meeting.

SPENDING THE AFTERNOON

For the afternoon of 4th May, prior to the A.G.M., the Committee of the Greater London Division has arranged the following alternative visits for the benefit of its own and visiting members:—

BRITISH MUSEUM LIBRARY

3 p.m. at the Montague Place Entrance (by two of the most pleasant sculptured lions in London). Those intending to go please inform **Mr. A. W. Ball, 28, Sedgemoor Drive, Dagenham, Essex**, as early as possible.

WEST SIDE STORY

2.30 p.m. at Her Majesty's Theatre. The G.L.D. Theatre Visits Organiser has secured a supply of 25s. stalls for **10s. 6d.** for this performance. Those wishing to take advantage of this bargain should apply as soon as possible to **Miss S. A. Wilson, Hampstead Garden Suburb Library, 15, Market Place, London, N.W.11.**

ASSOCIATION OF ASSISTANT LIBRARIANS
(Section of the Library Association).

64th ANNUAL REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31st DECEMBER, 1959.

The A.A.L. has again played a leading part in professional affairs during 1959. The report for 1958 stated that much thought had been given to the ways in which the Association could influence the many changes which were foreseen in our professional organisation and in the structure of the country's library service; it is gratifying to report that the seeds then sown fell on fertile ground, and that this year has been notable for the acceptance and implementation of these ideas.

The A.A.L. has long recognised that an effective library service throughout the country can only be achieved if the profession is united in a strong, well-organised Association which is capable of commanding the recognition and respect of society. It was abundantly clear that the Library Association was falling far short of this ideal, and that reforms were urgently required. Proposals put forward by the A.A.L. have included ideas for the overhaul of the executive of the Library Association, the need for an active public relations policy in the hands of a professional public relations officer, the reformation of the structure of the L.A., and the curbing of the power of institutional members.

These proposals have received a large measure of support, and are already bearing fruit. Following the appointment of Mr. Barry as Secretary of the Library Association various necessary reforms have been made in the office, and in addition a Public Relations Officer has been appointed. A survey is at present being made by Mr. Barry of the structure of the L.A., and this includes an examination of the place of institutional members. The A.A.L. is justly proud that in these matters it is no longer a voice crying in the wilderness, but is instead heard with respect.

The A.A.L. played a leading part also in campaigning against the notorious A.P.T. Award. Following the endorsement by the L.A. Membership Committee of the A.A.L. representative's rejection of the terms of the Award, the A.A.L. Council lost no time in organising an effective protest to NALGO. A fuller account of the action taken has already been published, but mention must be made here of the letter sent to every library representative giving advice upon the organisation of local protests, and of the thousands of signatures of members of NALGO collected on petition sheets up and down the country. At the request of Council, the Yorkshire Division printed and distributed leaflets at the Scarborough Conference of NALGO protesting against the terms of the A.P.T. Award, and urging support for the Nottingham and Solihull motion. There is no doubt that this action contributed greatly to the almost unanimous approval which the motion received.

Other matters which have concerned the Council during the year and which affect the profession as a whole have included the Roberts Committee Report, and the question of apathy in professional elections. In order to encourage the early implementation of the Report members have been urged to contact their local M.P.s., and members of Council have themselves written to their own members. At the time of the parliamentary election letters were sent at the request of the A.A.L. by the Library Association to the political parties. The problem of apathy in professional elections is being tackled by means of a campaign through the *Assistant Librarian* and by strengthening the

link with members through the library representatives. It is recognised, however, that it will take a long time to achieve any substantial change of attitude.

The induction of the President and the Annual General Meeting were held this year at Nottingham on the 13th May. The business meeting was notable only for being possibly the shortest on record, but it was followed by a fine Presidential Address. The A.A.L. Session at the Torquay Conference of the Library Association was devoted to a paper given by Mr. H. Smith. This stimulating and absorbing address provided one of the highlights of the Conference.

The tenth Annual Conference of the A.A.L. at Folkestone was outstandingly successful even by the high standards which we have come to expect at these gatherings. This was due in no small measure to the ability of the three discussion leaders, Messrs. A. Bill, W. Howard Phillips, and P. M. Whiteman, who tackled the theme *Libraries for a New Age—Purpose, Pattern, Practice*. The Council is especially grateful to them for their success in stimulating keen discussion amongst the younger members present. The Conference was notable, too, for the excellent arrangements made for accommodation and the social events, and a well-deserved tribute must be paid to the Conference Secretary, Mr. J. F. Yeates, the Kent Divisional Secretary, Mr. R. N. E. Dawe, and his Committee, and to our Honorary Assistant Secretary, Mr. R. Oxley, for the immense amount of hard work which they put in behind the scenes.

The annual report for 1958 stressed the need to give our Divisions more money, and during 1959 Council was able to do this by passing on to Divisions the whole of the increased Capitation of 1s. 3d. per head received from the Library Association. The total sum handed over to Divisions during the year was £1,237, and as a result many of them have been able to plan and carry out a programme of increased activities and meetings. With the slight increase made during 1958, the Divisional Capitation payments have been increased by 76 per cent over the 1957 figure.

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Profits for the sale of publications were considerably lower this year at £366, and income from sales cannot again be expected to reach the high figure achieved during 1958. Two of the major costs of running the Association—printing and railway fares—continue to rise, and the deficit in the General Account has reached over £1,000 for the second year in succession. This represents a heavy drain on the Publications Account, and we cannot hope to show more than a small profit in the immediate future. To meet this situation the Association will have either to seek an increased income, or to find a fresh source of income within the next two or three years, or else be faced with the grim necessity of reducing our activities.

There were five meetings of Council during the year. The following attendances were recorded:—

E. F. Ferry, F.L.A. (President), 5; A. C. Jones, F.L.A. (Vice-President), 5; O. S. Tomlinson, F.L.A. (Past-President), 5; *National Councillors*—D. J. Bryant, F.L.A., 5; G. Crowther, A.L.A., 5; Miss G. E. C. Edwards, A.L.A., 5; Miss L. E. Green, A.L.A., 5; W. Howard Phillips, F.L.A., 5; G. E. Smith, F.L.A., 5; H. Smith, F.L.A., 5; R. G. Surridge, F.L.A., 5; W. G. Thompson, F.L.A., 5; *Bristol*—R. J. Crudge, A.L.A., 1; B. F. Thatcher, A.L.A., 4; *Devon and Cornwall*—Mrs. T. McDowell, F.L.A., 4; *Eastern*—F. D. Sayer, A.L.A., 4; *East Midlands*—L. Greaves, A.L.A., 1; Mrs. M. Hubble, A.L.A., 1; Miss M. E. Liquorice, F.L.A., 4; R. F. Smith, F.L.A., 4; *Greater London*—B. H. Baumfield, F.R.S.A., F.L.A., 1; A. Bill, F.L.A., 4; P. M. Caldwell, A.L.A., 1; Miss M. B. Hill, A.L.A., 3; J. W. Lendon, A.L.A., 3; R. H. Millward, F.L.A., 2; D. J. Simpson, F.L.A., 2; S. J. Teague, F.L.A., 3; K. J. Thimbleby, A.L.A., 1; G. A. Vesey, B.A., F.L.A., 5; Miss C. R. Wildhaber, B.A., A.L.A., 4; *Kent*—R. N. E. Dawe, A.L.A., 4; Miss J. M. Plaister, F.L.A., 2 (1 as co-opted member); *Liverpool*—Miss J. R. T. Barton, A.L.A., 1; C. M. Hartley, F.L.A., 1; J. Hoyle, F.L.A., 5; Miss S. Pinches, A.L.A., 3; *Manchester*—R. Pickles, F.L.A., 2; Miss M. E. Taylor, A.L.A., 2; K. A. Whittaker, F.L.A., 5; *North Eastern*—T. M. Featherstone, A.L.A., 3; Miss N. M. Tully, A.L.A., 5; W. M. Watson, F.L.A., 2; *North Wales*—H. G. Roberts, 1; R. I. J. Tully, F.L.A., 4; *South Wales*—C. F. Shepherd, F.L.A., 4; *Sussex*—A. Dearden, F.L.A., 2; C. H. Ray, F.L.A., 3; *Wessex*—L. A. Duffner, A.L.A., 5; *West Midlands*—J. R. Dean, A.L.A., 1; H. E. Martin, A.L.A., 4; L. E. Taylor, A.L.A., 4; *West of Scotland*—J. M. Allan, 1; F. J. Guthrie, A.L.A., 3; C. Muris, M.A., F.L.A., 1; *Yorkshire*—W. S. H. Ashmore, F.L.A., 4; M. Hughes, 1; C. W. Taylor, F.L.A., 5; *Officers*—H. G. Holloway, A.L.A. (Hon. Treasurer), 5; D. Harrison, M.A., F.L.A. (Hon. Editor), 5; G. Langley, B.A., A.L.A. (Hon. Publications Officer), 5; Miss R. J. Ensing, F.L.A. (Hon. Membership Secretary), 5; J. S. Davey, F.L.A. (Hon. Education and Sales Officer), 5; W. F. Broome, F.L.A. (Hon. Films Officer), 3; R. Oxley, A.L.A. (Hon. Assistant Secretary), 4; J. H. Jones, A.L.A. (Hon. Secretary), 5.

DIVISIONS:

During 1959 the Divisions have benefited from an increase in their Capitation payments, and in consequence have been able to expand their activities. Reports of their work for the year make it clear that they have taken full advantage of this financial stimulus, and have served the profession well in maintaining lively programmes designed to attract and retain the interest of members.

Amongst the more ambitious projects must be mentioned the week-end conference and school of the Eastern Division at Felixstowe, and the eleventh week-end school of the Yorkshire Division at Grantley Hall. Both these events were highly successful, as were the Joint Week-end Conferences at Otterburn and St. Annes. The North Eastern Division participated in the former.

and the Manchester Division arranged accommodation for members of their own and other Divisions at St. Anne's at rates considerably lower than those charged to "senior" delegates.

Divisional meetings have included joint meetings, educational visits, talks by well known speakers, and sessions at which younger members have been encouraged to take the floor and to join in discussions. Perhaps the meeting which attracted the most attention was that held at the House of Commons by the Greater London Division when an audience of well over 200 members was addressed by Mr. J. P. McCall, M.P., on the subject of the Roberts Committee Report.

Part-time classes have continued to play an important part in Divisional programmes, and have included both evening sessions and one-day schools. Local publishing activities continued, and the Bristol and District Division established a divisional news sheet—*Link*—which appeared four times during the year. At the end of the year the Greater London Division was planning a handbook for library students in London.

PUBLICATIONS :

Although delayed by disputes in the printing trade, the Association published the British edition of Ranganathan's *Elements of library classification*, and reprinted the *Primer of classification* (Phillips), the *Primer of bibliography* (Mallaber), and the *Primer of non-book materials* (Mason). The rate of sale of the latter title has exceeded all expectations. In the press at the end of the year was a revised edition of the Guide to Part I of the Final Examination, and a reprint of the Guide to the Registration Examination.

Among the titles in active preparation which it is expected to publish in 1960 are at least two new publications either of which will, in size and expense of production, overshadow all other titles in the Association's list. These are Thompson's *Library Buildings*, and the new *Fiction Index*. In addition, it is expected to issue revised editions of *An introduction to historical bibliography* (Binns), *The public library committee* (Corbett), *Guides to the final examination Parts 2/a, 2/b and 2/c*, and a further reprint of the *Primer of bibliography*.

During 1959 it has become apparent that in future a large part of the Association's activities in the field of publishing will be concerned with the revision, reprinting and maintenance of stocks of existing works rather than with the relatively straightforward commissioning and production of new titles; a trend made complicated by the reluctance of many authors to engage in revisions of their books.

Prices of books in the Association's list have remained fairly stable during 1959, but a sharp increase in printing prices developed towards the end of the year, and it is unfortunately probable that the prices of revised and reprinted titles will have to be considerably increased.

THE ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN :

In spite of the printing dispute, *The Assistant Librarian* for 1959 appeared on time for eleven months out of the twelve, and the twelfth—the October issue—was only ten days late; a short period in the circumstances.

The Roberts Report, institutional membership, and the salaries situation, have been topics of the moment in *The Assistant Librarian's* pages. Correspondence has continued to be heavy; problems under discussion have included the examination system (dissected at some length by Messrs. Munford and Stokes), display, professional meetings, exploitation of the fiction stock, plastic jackets, and whether or not Chief Librarians should be allowed in the A.A.L. The unity of the profession has been discussed in an article by Mr. D. W. Riley and in correspondence; in this connection it is especially pleasing to

note the number of university and special librarians who write to, and therefore presumably read, *The Assistant Librarian*.

Articles have included several on libraries abroad, one on why exams. are failed, and one on how to pass them! The President's Address to the A.G.M. was printed in full and a shortened version of the paper delivered at the A.A.L. Session of the L.A. Conference by Mr. H. Smith, was included in the December issue.

The Examination Supplement for March was the last to be edited by Mr. E. F. Ferry, and Mr. F. Atkinson produced his first in September. Mr. Ferry's term of office as Editor of the Supplement is not the least of his many services to the Association, and we hope Mr. Atkinson will maintain the high standard he has set himself with the September issue.

VISUAL AIDS:

During the year there has been an increased number of enquiries for films, filmstrips and slides, and for information about the sources and supply of visual aids in Librarianship from libraries, colleges and schools. To meet this growing demand a duplicated catalogue was prepared. Requests for information included some for advice on the purchase of projectors, a list of filmstrips illustrating the classics and fairy tales, lists of filmstrips about children's libraries, new films from America and Canada about librarianship, and many others.

The films *Index to Progress* and *Resources Discovered* continued to be loaned to libraries, schools, colleges, Youth Employment Officers, Local Authorities, and Tenants' Associations. The filmstrip *Charging Methods* was published during the year, and *The Public Librarian* (for the Educational

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Productions Ltd. Series: "Local Government Officers") was ready for publication at the end of the year.

The new collection of 2in. by 2in. slides has not been used very much. Two selections have been loaned—one to a Local Authority in England for public relations purposes, and the other to a Youth Employment Officer in Scotland for a careers talk.

EDUCATION :

Apart from the routine work of arranging and revising courses and maintaining a Panel of Tutors, two projects occupied the regular attention of the Education Committee. Firstly, a list of essential textbooks for F.P.E. and Registration Examination subjects, which should be in all libraries, reached its final draft. This list will be issued in 1960 to encourage authorities to make good the deficiencies of their stocks.

Secondly, negotiations have proceeded with the Loughborough School of Librarianship to arrange a joint National Residential Revision School in time for the June 1960 examinations.

During the year the following members were welcomed to the Panel of Practising Tutors:—R. C. Denniss, F.L.A.; Miss R. J. Ensing, F.L.A.; Mrs. E. Knowles, F.L.A.; and Miss W. D. Stevens, F.L.A. The following resignations were received with regret:—Miss H. Nock, F.L.A.; Miss J. M. Petersen, M.A., F.L.A.; P. D. Record, M.A., F.L.A.; H. S. A. Smith, M.A., F.L.A.; K. Smith, F.R.E.S., F.L.A.; and C. W. Taylor, F.L.A.

One thousand two hundred and seventy-four courses were arranged as against 1,233 in 1958. Eleven courses were revised, and tuition covered 20 subjects.

In order to help set up training facilities for library education, sets of A.A.L. courses and stationery were sent to the East Caribbean Regional Library School and the Tasmania State Library Service.

MEMBERSHIP :

Once again membership showed an increase, the total at 31st December being 8,189, distributed among the Divisions as follows:—

Bristol	...	...	293	North Wales	...	...	47
Devon and Cornwall	...	...	141	South Wales	...	...	222
Eastern	...	...	143	Sussex	...	...	154
East Midland	...	...	505	Wessex	...	...	233
G.L.D.	...	...	2684	West Midland	...	...	746
Kent	...	...	258	West of Scotland	...	...	280
Liverpool	...	...	465	Yorkshire	...	...	635
Manchester	...	...	526	Central (i.e. rest of Scotland,	...	...
North Eastern	...	...	447	Ireland, Overseas)	...	...	410
Total—8,189.							

Comparative figures for the last five years were:—

1954	1955	1956	1957	1958
6637	7238	7396	7605	7857

A total of 983 new members of the Library Association opted for the A.A.L. this year.

THE FUTURE :

As the years go by, perhaps the ordinary member feels that there is less and less to say about the future, but the flurry of activity in the library world during the past twelve months proves this feeling to be wrong. One important task must occupy our attention during 1960, and that is a re-stimulation of interest in so many of our laggard members. A democracy which fails to exercise its rights and privileges may well surrender its powers to autocracy.

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whether or not the autocrats are really desirous of assuming power. This applies in the A.A.L., and it behoves all members to see to it that the Association keeps its vitality through a regular influx of new blood at Divisional and National level. At the moment, relations between the A.A.L. and the L.A. are set fair, as they should be. We must, however, be always watchful of assistants' interests, but this means constructive criticism rather than active opposition to the parent body. Maintenance of this watchfulness depends to a large extent upon the continued refreshing of ideas and replacement of officers after they have done their stint of service.

It may well be that 1960 will see the implementing of some at least of the proposals of the Roberts Committee. One thing is certain—librarianship will not stand still, and some of the movement will be in the hands of members of the A.A.L. May we hope that no opportunities for improvement and unification of the library service will be lost.

E. F. FERRY, *President.*

J. H. JONES, *Honorary Secretary.*

STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

1st January to 31st December, 1959

GENERAL ACCOUNT

To:	INCOME.	£	s.	d.	By:	EXPENDITURE.	£	s.	d.
Capitation Grant	..	2848	3	7	Payments to Divisions	...	1239	7	0
Subscriptions	..		10	0	Councillors' Expenses	..	833	3	4
Assistant Librarian: Subs.	..	168	2	4	Library	..	110	0	0
Assistant Librarian: Advtg.	..	431	1	9	Stationery	..	61	17	6
Balance from Conference					Postage	..	52	6	9
Secretary	..	28	10	9	Conference	..	71	9	7
Refunds of Loans	..	5	0	0	Annual Election	..	71	0	9
		3481	8	5	Clerical Expenses	..	123	10	0
					Martin Award	..	10	10	0
					Assistant Librarian—				
Transferred from Publica-					Printing	..	1475	4	11
tions Account	..	1150	17	7	Distribution	..	517	4	5
					Loans to Divisions	..	51	0	0
					Miscellaneous	..	15	11	9
		£4632	6	0			£4632	6	0

PUBLICATIONS ACCOUNT

To:	INCOME.	£	s.	d.	By:	EXPENDITURE.	£	s.	d.
Balance from 1958	..	1861	9	9	Printing	..	780	11	0
Sales	..	1941	7	7	Royalties	..	497	10	11
Index to Progress—					Distribution	..	116	1	6
Sales	..	33	17	9	Stationery	..	16	3	4
Rentals	..		12	6	Postage	..	115	19	8
Resources Discovered—					Films	..	16	16	11
Sales	..	31	18	3	Filmstrip	..	28	5	10
Rentals	..		7	6	Insurance	..	5	13	3
Charging Methods: Sales	..	15	17	6	Clerical Expenses	..	75	0	0
Cancelled Cheque	..	4	19	4	Miscellaneous	..	10	18	7
					Transferred to General A/c	..	1150	17	7
							2813	18	7
					Balance in hand	..	1076	11	7
		£3890	10	2			£3890	10	2

INCOME.				EXPENDITURE.			
	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
Balance from 1958 ..	223	2	2	Tutors' Expenses ..	3107	3	6
Students' Fees ..	4412	11	9	Hon. Education Secretary's Expenses ..	191	5	0
				Postage ..	90	0	0
				Stationery, etc. ..	238	10	6
				Refunds of Fees ..	8	10	0
				Standard Courses—			
				Comp. and Editing ..	155	8	0
				Duplicating ..	228	4	3
				Clerical Expenses ..	75	0	0
				Miscellaneous ..	1	10	0
					4095	11	3
				Balance in Hand ..	540	2	8
					£4635	13	11
	£4635	13	11				

INCOME.			EXPENDITURE.		
To:		£ s. d.	By:		£ s. d.
Balance from 1958	..	450 12 11	Loans (two)	..	90 0 0
Part Repayment of Loans		20 0 0	Balance in Hand	..	391 0 0
Interest on Deposit Account		2 17 1			
Interest on Savings Certificates	7 10 0			
		<u>£481 0 0</u>			<u>£481 0 0</u>

All the above statements audited and found correct.

A. E. BROWN, W. H. MABEY, *Hon. Auditors.*

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